



# Necedah

## *National Wildlife Refuge*



### About the Refuge

Ten thousand years ago, retreating glaciers left behind vast peat bogs and sand ridges, creating the area known as the great Central Wisconsin Swamp. Today, more than 44,000 acres of that historic area make up the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. Located in Central Wisconsin, the refuge features large tracts of oak barrens; sand prairies; forests of pine, oak and aspen; and critical open water impoundments. Traditionally, the area was habitat for waterfowl and sandhill cranes. Today, threatened, endangered and rare species such as the Karner blue butterfly, Blanding's turtle and gray wolf inhabit the refuge. The refuge also provides an introduction site for the experimental, eastern population of whooping cranes. The habitat mosaic is maintained by prescribed burning, seasonal mowing, and timber clearing and is monitored and maintained to insure overall vigor of the ecosystem.

Each year, nearly 150,000 people visit Necedah to hike refuge trails, watch and photograph wildlife, hunt and fish. Students from around Central Wisconsin, from Kindergarten through college, make the refuge their classroom as they explore the plants and animals that live there. Visitors enjoy an array of public programs, tours, and special events throughout the year – on topics from fishing to migratory birds. The Friends of Necedah volunteer their time and talent to support refuge programs and events.

Photos from top:

Wood ducks, USFWS, Karner blue butterfly, USFWS, Bluebird, D. Peterson, USFWS



## **Refuge Facts**

- Established: 1939
- Acres: 44,696
- Host site for whooping crane reintroduction

## **Financial Impact of Refuge**

- 13 person staff
- 160,000 visitors annually
- FY 2009 Budget: \$5.7 million
- Timber sales from forest management

## **Natural History**

- Refuge is located in the Great Central Wisconsin Swamp, the largest wetland bog in the state (7,800 square miles)
- Extensive forest habitat (pine, oak, aspen) and large tracts of rare oak barrens habitat
- Traditional habitat for waterfowl and sandhill cranes
- Impoundments provide acres of open wetland habitat
- Provides habitat for threatened, endangered and rare species such as the Karner blue butterfly and Blanding's turtle
- Beaver, coyote, turkey, gray wolves and white-tailed deer are common resident wildlife species

## **Refuge Objectives**

- Provide breeding and migration habitat for birds
- Protect and restore whooping cranes and the Karner blue butterfly
- Provide for biodiversity
- Provide public opportunities for outdoor recreation and environmental education
- Restore rare oak savanna habitat

## **Management Tools**

- Water level management
- Prescribed burning
- Timber harvest
- Outreach and environmental education
- Restoration of whooping cranes in the eastern United States

## **Public Use Opportunities**

- Interpretation
- Hunting and fishing
- Environmental education
- Wildlife observation and photography
- Hiking
- Wildlife hotspot route
- Berry picking